

## My Beautiful Scar: The Power of Prayer

\*takes deep breaths, tries not to shed a tear\*

This is really hard expressing my medical life and life in general. I have told in person a 1000 times but writing it seems so much harder because, you have to gather the thoughts in correct order.

Let's see I was born on a humid day or so my mother says, since she was pregnant. She says out of her three pregnancies (Jessica and Lauren) I was the perfect one. I have tried so hard to figure out what went wrong afterwards but the only conclusion was I was probably taken home a bit too early and my lungs weren't fully developed. I was whisked back to the hospital during a three month time (only six weeks when I developed polyps in my narrow airway). This is the hardest part because, I was only three months and my nephew is now almost a year old and I feel helpless because Owen is healthy and I was struggling for every breath. The doctors in Atlanta had no choice but to trach me because, the scar tissue kept developing and let's just say they made a boo-boo causing scaring around my vocal chords. It wasn't their fault really. People always ask me, "Why don't you sue them?" Because, my mother and father wanted a child to live a normal life as possible.

I remember being trached around that my parents, stepmother Kathy, siblings would always OVER-protect me to the extreme. "No Jaclyn." It was tough talking with a tube down my throat so I mostly replied in my head and rolled my eyes. I wanted to talk sooo bad when I had the plastic trach (there are two types of tracheotomies: metal or plastic. the metal one is surgically installed). My parents chose the plastic ones though they had to be changed more. It was quite hard learning to talk because with an plastic tracheotomy in my neck; so I mostly kept quiet but I did have alot of times when I wanted to speak my mind.

I think the worst part for my parents when they realized if the trach did come out that my voice would sound more hoarse and they didn't want their child to be ridiculed by society. In a way, I was blessed that I could talk so clearly (more clearer now since the jaw distraction) . I am thankful now that I can speak my mind though the stares still get to me. In a way I know how the well know people feel when they get spotted in public view except I don't have bodyguards. It's a sad life but, you have to make the most of it.

I suppose I should continue on this blog now. If a sentence or paragraph just ends. Forgive me, I tend to speak in run-ons as well. I hate talking about the jaw distraction because it led me to the drug induced coma and seeing the picture with all of the wires breaks my heart.

So let me begin telling you I was a sophomore in high school crushing on a boy as usual, you know the typical high school scenerio : basketball games, plays, being with friends. My freshmen year I did alot more of stuff than I did the years that following my senior. During the summer of myself about to be in the 10th grade. My mother and I took our annual doctor's check up of my airway to Cincinnati Children's. What we found out was horrific because, my doctor Dr. Cotton recommended that I have a jaw surgery since, I was having bouts of sleep apnea. After having second opinions from doctors in Atlanta and some in Lawrenceville. We finally went back to Cincinnati to have a appointment with the plastic surgeon that works with Dr. Cotton the year after I graduated we just decided to have the jaw surgeries.

October 22, 2004 was the scheduled date. My orthodontist in Snellville put on the surgical wires and was corresponding with the plastic surgeon. My father and stepmother Jill had flew in that night and we met up with them in the hospital lobby. All I knew I was doing God's will even if it meant dying. I was just 20. After the surgery I woke up high from the medicine. I don't remember anything. My mother told me that I have lost a large amounts of blood and had to have a blood transfusion. Most of the memories of waking up I remember being on the children's floor (teenage level) then went back to the ICU. The second time I was in the ICU my levels were dropping until a Indian doctor recommended that they drug induce me for a couple of days. The worst part of being 20 while I was practically dying it was my choice to decide the coma. I just remember shaking my head in a approval then slowly falling asleep. That was October 26th, 2004.

After six weeks of being home and having my mouth cranked to the farthest it has ever been. I still worked part time at Carlinvision only when I felt motivated to go in. December 21, 2004 arrived and my sisters,mother and myself road-tripped back to Cincinnati, Ohio. It was a freezing day on the scheduled date for the removal of the distractors which was giving me the WORST pain. I tend to hide my physical & emotional pain very well with all of the hoopla I have been through. The jaw distraction was the first time I ever felt physical pain. Bug bites, ant bites never bothered me I would always shrug it off .

I don't remember waking up after the two hour surgery but, I do remember going to a different section of the hospital in case, I go back into a coma. Since, my plastic surgeon took some bone out of my ribcage to fix up my nose a bit (free nose job) . I was fine to go home but, I knew I was still in pain from having part of my ribcage removed (very little of my ribs) but, my brother in law was anxious to see my older sister due to the holidays and Cincinnati had the worst blizzard. We were very careful driving back to Atlanta.

It was around the time the great tsunami in the Philippines when, my body would ache and my right

side became numb that I was on my deathbed. The tsunami was traumatic for the victims but, my body was failing once again. My stepfather and mother rushed me to the local hospital, my mother called my plastic surgeon in Cincinnati explaining that I was back in the hospital. He was already a emotional mess when he found I was in a drug induced coma from the first surgery. I hope he isn't a Dr. Gregory House by now.. I stayed in the hospital about two weeks the week of New Year's Eve & Day 2005. I enjoyed visitors from my church and then pastor Rusty Schuler and family. I am thankful for the church families who prayed for my family in the darkest hour of my life. My pulmonary doctor syringed my back and got about 2 jars of liquid from my back. I was pretty frail and weak.

I guess I am a survivor, saint, but I hate to think of myself like that. I appreciate the compliments that I receive but I am just a normal girl who enjoys writing, hanging with friends, date nights and just being content altogether with my life.

Now the toughest part is writing about the negativities of being disabled physically and emotionally is that as I type this down listing all of the cons I seem to become depressed. Here is an perfect scenerio : Imagine the lowest part of feeling rejected or just the lowest of you're life x 10,000? That's how the disabled community feels whenever we are around society who can do so much more than us. We are the outsiders of the society who just kicked around like trash. We find it easier to blog our thoughts than having to deal with people face to face.

As I was thinking tonight as I was thinking that so many people have these extraordinary testimonies from drug overdoses, depression etc. I realized I never really had one of those testimonies and how I came to Christ. My testimony was mostly about the Power of Prayer and how my mother and father never gave up on prayer as I lay in a hospital bed struggling for every breath. I don't know all the answers to the questions to the theology of Christianity but I wouldn't mind discussing them and questioning myself . My life is centered around Faith how God never let me down in the darkest moments of my life.

Jesus sees the beauty in the weak.

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